

Coming Home
Virginia Reentry Model
Virginia State Crime Commission

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The Facts

- Virginia has 42 adult institutions and community diversion and detention centers
- Facilities range from 90 inmates to over 3,000 inmates

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The Facts

From FY1990 and FY2005, the Virginia prison population nearly doubled, increasing from 18,164 to 34,903. The per capita incarceration rate in Virginia rose from 279 per 100,000 to 472 per 100,000.

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The Facts

Prisoner reentry into the community is virtually a certainty: more than 90% of those who enter state prison will be released

Over 12,000 offenders are released each year from Virginia correctional centers

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- **The National Governors Association (NGA) Center for Best Practices announced in July 2003 that Virginia was one of seven states selected to participate in its Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy**
- **Virginia's Policy Academy project team brought together representatives of the agencies and organizations that deliver services to ex-offenders and their families**

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- **NGA assisted state teams in developing effective prisoner reentry strategies designed to strengthen public safety and reduce costly recidivism rates by improving pre-and post-release services**
- **Virginia Reentry group has met together and as sub-committees to identify the specific causes for reentry failure in the state and develop strategies to address these**

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- The overall reentry group identified and prioritized reentry barriers and needs
- Four subcommittees were then established based on broad categorizations of need or barriers to successful reentry

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- **Financial Obligations, Community Resources and Housing**
- **Family & Community Reintegration**
- **Employment and Education**
- **Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse**

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- Each subcommittee identified roadblocks to successful reintegration
- Sub-committees developed workplans that included and proposed actions to address those
- Together the recommendations and workplans formed the model for reentry in Virginia

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Governor Kaine issued Executive Order 22 in June of 2006 establishing the Virginia Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy. The Academy is comprised of 24 Executive Branch agency heads.

Executive Order 22 strengthens support for the NGA Policy Academy, fosters successful transition of offenders into communities and supports fulfillment of Section 2.2-221.1 of the Code of Virginia directing the Secretary of Public Safety to establish a system for coordinating the planning and provision of reentry services,

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The Academy has the following responsibilities:

- **Provide on-going coordination at the executive level of reentry initiatives across the state**
- **Explore programs that will aid with the offender reintegration**
- **Address policies and practices that impede successful reintegration**
- **Work collaboratively to implement new policies and procedures**
- **Submit a status report of actions taken to improve offender transitional and reentry services to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees no later than November 15 of each year**

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- The Virginia reentry model is being piloted in five (soon to be seven) localities
- The pilot programs allow for testing and evaluating implementation of the model developed from Virginia's participation in the NGA Policy Academy on Prisoner Reentry
- Program localities were selected on a volunteer basis

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- **Directors of local departments of social services serve as conveners for Reentry Councils in the program localities . Reentry Councils are composed of representatives of public and private agencies, businesses, community-based service providers and faith-based organizations.**
- **Local councils develop a reentry plan for their locality that identifies resources available, methods for interagency coordination, integrated service delivery and implementation of policy academy recommendations.**

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- Each locality has an assigned state correctional facility from which offenders are referred for participation in the pilot program:

Correctional Centers

Greensville Correctional Center

Coffeewood Correctional Center

Haynesville Correctional Center

Powhatan Correctional Center

Fluvanna Correctional Center

Pilot Localities

Norfolk/Greensville-Emporia

Culpeper

King G.& Planning District*

Richmond

Culpeper/Richmond/Norfolk

*PD 16 –King George, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Fredericksburg, Caroline

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Reentry pilots are also being developed in two additional areas of the state:

- Albemarle/Charlottesville is implementing the Virginia Reentry Model as a jail only pilot
- Southwestern Virginia has begun a regional pilot to implement the model for federal offenders returning to the community

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Virginia Reentry Model is characterized by:

- Pre-release planning
- Community collaboration
- Integrated service delivery
- Connection to positive community influences & family support

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- Program participants are provided Information about services and obligations that effect them and their families during their time of incarceration
- Representatives of the correctional facility and the local Reentry Council meet with the offender and together they develop plans for their return to the community

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- In the 12 months following release there will be ongoing contact with a representative (s) of the local reentry council
- Councils are developing methods for on-going communication and support for the returning ex-offender. Outcomes being measured are:

Employment

Family/Community Relationships

Housing

Mental Health/SAS

Financial Obligations

Recidivism

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- Program model includes family-to-family mentoring during the re-entry process and for 12 months following release.

- Team Approach

Mentor Couples or Two-Person Teams

- Family-to-Family Mentor Training

Mentor Sponsor Organization

Mentor Supervisor

Mentors

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As well as relationship building and support, mentors will promote and facilitate ex-offender and family member skills building.

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■ Fatherhood/Motherhood

The goal is to improve the emotional, social, mental and physical health of children through positive father/mother involvement. The focus is to get and keep fathers/mothers involved with their children and to improve the quality of their relationships.

■ Parenting

Assist parents to enhance their parenting skills

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- **Strengthening Relationships**

Communication

Conflict resolution

Problem Solving

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■ Education

Support ex-offender and family members in achieving education goals

Facilitate communication between home and school

Facilitate links with education resources in community– Race to the GED, etc

- Of those released from Virginia correctional facilities last year, 52% entered prison without a high school diploma or GED.

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- **Financial Literacy**

Assist ex-offender and family members in strengthening skills in the management of personal financial affairs including income, financial obligations, banking, savings, consumer protection, Earned Income Tax Credit

- **Department of Correctional Education data shows 37% of those leaving Virginia prisons report money and credit a post-release problem and 21% report is somewhat of a problem**

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Program volunteers identified three major challenges upon their release:

- **Paying off debts**
- **Obtaining employment**
- **Finding a place to live**

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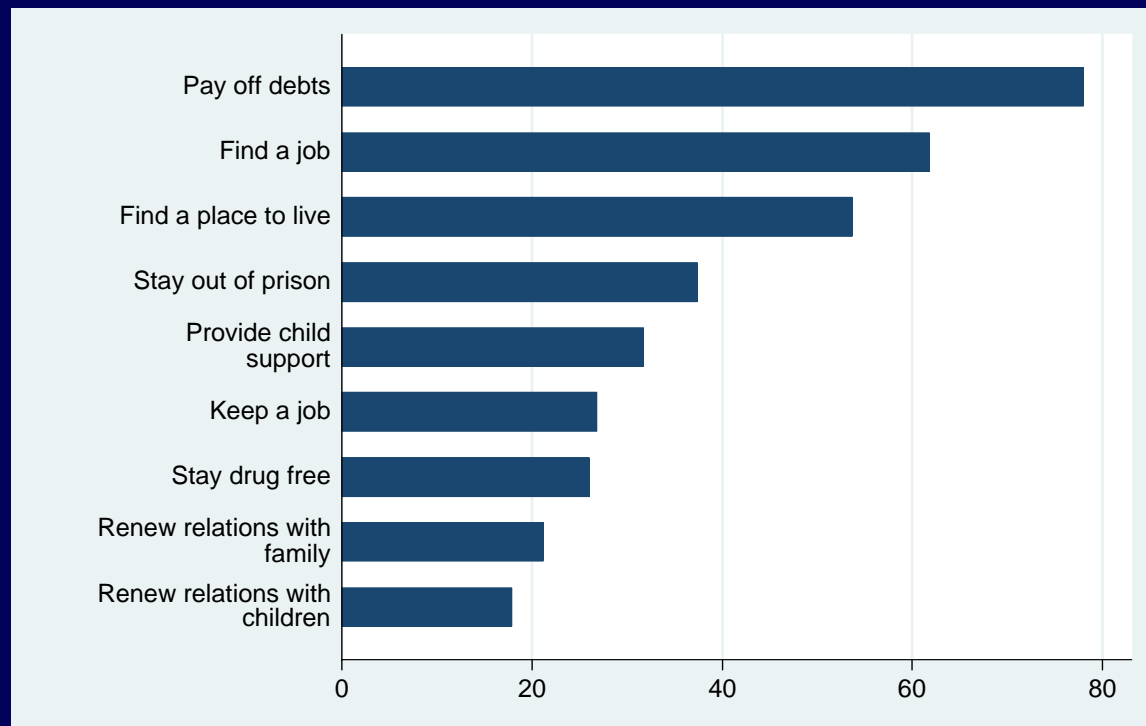
The most frequently identified needs for help upon release were:

- financial assistance (61 percent)
- finding a job (52 percent)
- getting health care (51 percent)
- getting transportation (50 percent)

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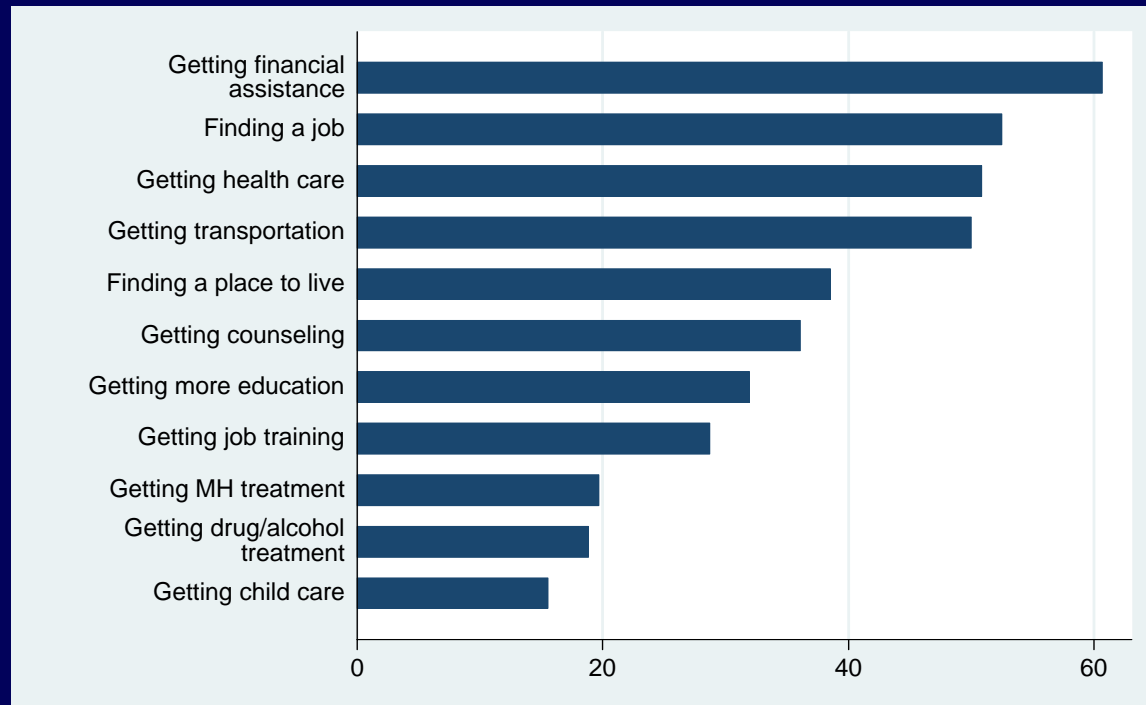
Percent of volunteers who said it will be “hard” or “very hard” after release to:



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- Percent of volunteers who said they will need a lot of help after release:



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- Most incarcerated men and women return to communities and to families
- Better pre-lease planning, interagency coordination, integrated service delivery and links to positive community influences with support of people that care will help decrease reentry barriers and help increase the opportunity for those returning to be contributing member of the communities to which they return

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- **Successful reentry**

 - improves public safety**

 - supports families**

 - is good stewardship of tax dollars**

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